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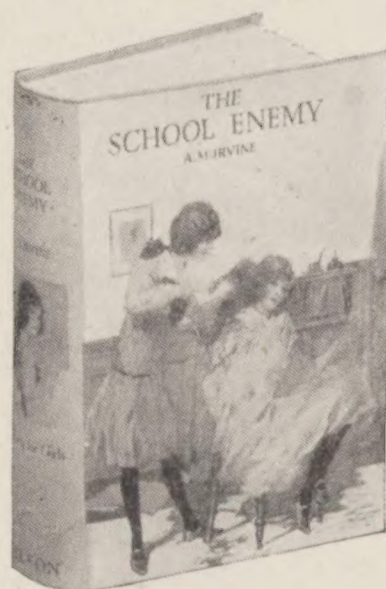
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# THE CHILDREN'S PAPER

DECEMBER 1925

THOMAS NELSON AND SONS, LTD.

## The Christmas Crusoes

BY MARY SHREWSBURY

"SO that's *that*!" said Flavia, posting the letter in the village post-office and trying not to feel a beast. "After all, home's *home* at Christmas-time."

"And I don't suppose Aunt Drury really expected us. She couldn't have. And, of course . . ." Excuses began to pour from Geraldine's lips.

"It's possible, of course," remarked Flavia to her younger and only sister, "that she really wanted us. She may be nervous after that burglary!"

Geraldine said nothing, and it was almost a relief when half an hour later a second letter arrived.

"From Dad." Flavia pulled it open with eagerness, while her sister looked over the hastily written screed from behind.

Dad wrote to say that he had heard from Great-Aunt Drury that Great-Aunt Drury would be glad if the girls would spend Christmas with her. That Dad thought, under the circumstances, that they would like to keep the old lady company. "We'll keep the home festivities till New Year," wrote Dad, "if you will go. I invited the old lady here, but she is afraid to leave her house after the burglary."

The girls looked at each other.

"The post's been too slow or too fast, or something," said Flavia. "Here, we'll go out and send another letter. We'll send two. One to Aunt Drury to say that we're coming after all, and one to Dad to say that too. After the burglary we can't do anything else."

For there had been a burglary at Great-Aunt Drury's. Quite an important one, apparently, although neither of the girls was very sure exactly what had been burgled at the time.

Before the burglary, apparently, their father's aunt had not been on friendly terms with her nephew; since the burglary, owing to his attempts to help the old lady, it appeared that she had unbent towards him. "Although it's almost too much of a good thing if she starts asking us for Christmas," decided Geraldine, affixing her stamp. "That is, of course, if we spend Christmas anywhere but at school in this rain!"

Flavia looked window-wards also at her sister's words, and surveyed the downpour.

It was dreadful; it was hopeless; for days on end the rain had streamed and teemed. The hockey field had been nothing but a swamp for over a week; the posts were gleaming hopelessly towards each other as though fearing that the rain would never stop.

Next day, leaving the rest of the jolly company at the junction and stepping into the small slow train which hied itself Ristonwards two or three times daily, they found that floods dogged them on every side; that the train here and there splashed nobly through water; that the dampness of the world in general seemed to increase with the miles.

"Rather damping to our spirits, what?" inquired Flavia.

Geraldine attempted a sodden sort of smile as the stationmaster approached them.

Oh yes, they could reach Riston House. Still—The last word had rather an ominous sound. Oh yes, but the rains had been so heavy that the bus had stopped running. Still, there'd be a farmer's cart going almost at once, if they didn't mind.

"Our aunt, Miss Drury, hasn't sent to meet us?"

"No." The stationmaster shook his head.

The farmer's cart, being high and old-fashioned, was, however, thankfully climbed up into. "I can't imagine what we'd have done without it," remarked Flavia as they lurched through watery roads, and received splashes as high as their brows from the roads below. "I do hope and trust she's got jolly fires and Yule logs and things. And I'm frightfully hungry. And——"

The farmer's cart lurched to a standstill at the gateway of a rather desolate-looking house.

"This 'ere's Riston 'Ouse," vouchsafed its loutish driver. He handed down their suit-cases and clicked up his shaggy steed without another word.

"Come on, any port in a storm," remarked Flavia, dashing up the garden path.

"If Aunt Drury's keen on her garden she must be sick of these pools," remarked Geraldine, splashing along. "Why, those laurels are half covered, and I believe there are flowers hidden away there."

It was not far to the front steps of the rather ordinary-looking little villa. The porch felt like a haven after the pelting of the raindrops. They felt



like shipwrecked mariners returning home as they rang the bell, even though home was only Aunt Drury's. However——

"Well, that's over. Here beginneth the Christmas holidays!" quoth Flavia as they waited.

Was it over? They waited on. They waited on and on. They rang also more than half a dozen times before they finally despaired.

They stared at each other.

"Would we be trespassing?" inquired Geraldine, suddenly beginning to sneeze, "if we found a way in? My fingers are dead, and——"

Flavia, after a glance at her sister, decided that whether such a course might rightly be termed trespassing or not, it was the only course open to them.

The back door was closed and locked. Much banging brought no result. Flavia, to the refrain of much sneezing from the front porch, pioneered round.

"I say, most of the windows are shut, too, and bolted," remarked she, returning like a drowned rat to the porch. "Evidently they're not keen on fresh air in this house. But I've found an entrance—through the scullery window; and if Aunt Drury comes meanwhile, please explain."

Presently Flavia's head emerged.

"Come in. I say——"

"What's up?"

"A lot. Or else nothing, whichever you like to call it. The house is shut up. Aunt Drury must have gone out of the back door. It's all bolted and barred; the scullery window was an oversight. There's not even a fire."

"Oh!" exclaimed Geraldine, collapsing.

There was a time-table, however, which, being promptly perused by Flavia, disclosed the fact that the last train had gone as well as their aunt.

"Probably she's in it. Probably she got our first letter. It's our own fault, absolutely. She decided that she'd spend Christmas elsewhere. Now the question is——"

"Where's the coal?" said Geraldine, finishing her sister's sentence for her.

The next half-hour was rather fun. It simply had to be fun or it would have been too hateful, for they'd got to camp for the night at least in this spot. To return to the station would have been useless, and here, at any rate, was shelter from the rain.

"If you know of a better 'ole, go to it, of course," remarked Flavia. "But it's not so bad, and I'm sure Aunt Drury won't mind. See, the fire's going at last!"

"Not so bad," remarked they, grinning at each other; "really rather a lark. We'll do better to-morrow. We'll take the first train home."

"Meantime, bed," besought Geraldine, leading the way upstairs.

"I do trust Aunt Drury has gone somewhere nice," remarked Flavia. "Really, we're not so badly off here. Awfully queer and un-Christmasy; as un-Christmasy as the weather." She peered out of the window as she spoke. "The water's as high as ever—higher, I think. No doubt bed's the spot."

"We'll be sitting up late to-morrow telling about *this*," declared Geraldine; "so let's get to sleep early to-night, and to-morrow will come the quicker."

They did. They slept like tops, too, in the quiet of the empty house. Morning had dawned before Flavia sat up in bed.

"You up, Gerry?"

"Up?—no. You've wakened me asking me," returned her sister sleepily. "Up?"

"I thought I heard you splashing in the bathroom."

*Splashing!* They both sprang out of bed in a maze. For a noise, not so much of splashing, perhaps, as of gentle lap-lapping, sounded in the house. They opened the bedroom door stealthily and peeped out. Then Flavia gave a cry.

"Gerry! Oh, what on earth shall we do?"

"Flavia, what is it?"

"It's water. We're ancient mariners, and Noah's arks, and everything else watery you can imagine. The water's come in!"

"In!" repeated Gerry, with a yell.

"Into the house. Here, go back to bed. It's below. It's coming in under the door. Listen! I believe that's one of the hall chairs being carried around! Gerry, we'll *never* get home."

A look through the window decided them that home, for a time at least, was not for them.

A wide, grey expanse of water covered the garden. Rain still poured from heavens as grey as the waters beneath.

"I see men in a boat on what was a road yesterday," reported Flavia.

"Wave to them. *Do wave!*" begged Gerry.

"You can spend your time waving if you like, but we'd better retrieve the things from below first of all, I'm thinking," remarked her sister.

By the time the ten o'clock train was due to steam homewards from Riston—if the floods had allowed it to steam—the girls had done a good two hours' work. They were now surveying each other with eyes in which amazement and amusement were mingled.

"It's a good thing that we can laugh about it," remarked Flavia. "But it's no laughing matter."

It was not. Around them, in the bedroom which they had settled upon as their own, lay a collection of necessary articles retrieved from below—food,





kindling, coal, and things which could not be left to the mercies of the flood.

"That's all. That last journey down almost did for me. How we're going to get dried I don't know. It is frightful to think of the things we can't bring up out of the water. The piano for one thing."

Geraldine had hung out the flag before they had started the downstairs operations; but even the largest bath-towel hung out in the soaking rain forgets to look like a flag.

"Even if any one passed by he wouldn't see it," said Flavia. "Well, to look on the bright side, it's just as well that the water is too high for us to go down again, because that means we can strip ourselves of every single garment and dry them. We'll simply have to count on being rescued to-morrow, for we've got to have a good fire now to dry the clothes. Come along and let's see what Aunt Drury's wardrobe affords."

It afforded two fur coats, and sundry necessities besides. The girls returned to their room and to a vantage spot by the window.

Miles and miles and miles of water spread before them. "Regular islanders we are here," remarked Flavia, yawning. "Not a soul in sight either, boating or otherwise." She gave a huge yawn.

The morning's work had been arduous in the extreme; sleep seemed desirable. Gerry, watching her, suggested it at once.

"I say, we'll watch in turns. I'll sit by the window and report. You can get forty winks."

Flavia thankfully rolled over on the bed. How long she slept she didn't know. She was suddenly conscious of Geraldine whispering in her ear, while Geraldine's hand was simultaneously held over her mouth.

"For goodness' sake wake up, but don't speak while you're doing it!" adjured Geraldine.

Flavia, throwing sleep to the winds at this curious happening, sat up.

Geraldine, facing her at the end of the bed, was shaking with terror.

"Gerry, what's wrong?"

"It's steps. I heard them. Outside. I think I heard voices, but I don't know. And—how did they come? I'm afraid to look out of the room."

"Steps! Bunkum!" retorted her sister, slipping from the bed.

"Bunkum! It isn't. If you'd been awake——"

"Rats, then. They leave sinking ships, don't they? Well, they'll leave swimming kitchens too, I daresay." Flavia had pulled herself together and was making her way to the door. Geraldine, shaking in every limb, prepared to follow her. They quietly turned the handle and peered into the passage outside.

Then even Flavia took a sudden step back, while, equally suddenly, she gasped with horror.

There was the imprint of a foot just outside the door; there were more imprints; they led in the direction of Miss Drury's bedroom.

At that instant voices broke in, clear and penetrating; evidently the speakers did not imagine themselves overheard. They stood inside Miss Drury's bedroom; their words were plainly audible.

"Then you know where the packet is?"

"In a sense, yes; and in a sense I do not. I am



trying now to locate the place where the girl said she had hidden the papers. There is, apparently, one clump of laurels in the garden, and she hid them there. There seemed no hurry to retrieve them. I meant to let the matter wait until the excitement had died down, but this flood alters the matter. The packet may not be watertight."

By this time Flavia and Geraldine had crept to the door of Aunt Drury's room. Two strangers—both of them men—stood with their backs to the girls, peering out over the flooded garden.

"It will be perfectly easy to explain to any one



whom we may meet that we were anxious about the old lady. As a matter of fact, I have had the house watched for a few weeks back, and I know that she left for her nephew's house yesterday to spend Christmas. This flood decided me to make no delay. That packet means thousands. And——"

Geraldine at that moment pointed with a shaking forefinger at the bedroom key. It was *outside*.

"Now, where *are* those laurels?" one of the strangers was inquiring of his companion, when "click!" sounded behind them as Flavia turned the key. After she had turned it, she herself turned to face a dancing Gerry.

"Flavia, I know where the laurels are! D'you remember I pointed them out to you on the way up the garden path! Flavia——"

"That's all right," remarked Flavia through cold lips; "but I don't see. And they may break down the door; and we're here alone and——"

As bang! bang! came at the bedroom door Gerry still managed to grin almost elfishly.

"You're not gone dotty, are you? You understand we're trapped, don't you?" inquired her sister.

"Trapped! We're not. *They* will be." Gerry was leading the way down the first few steps. She pointed. "They came by boat, of course. See, it's just outside the stair window. D'you see *now*?"

Flavia did. She literally shook with relief as they stepped into the boat. The colour came back into her cheeks as she took the oars.

"Laurelwards, *ho!* with a rumble-o!" said she.

They were thankful for the fur coats by the time they had retrieved what was hidden in the laurels. It was an adventure which took time, for they didn't intend to leave without securing the spoils. "Not that the burglars can get away, but it's safer; and if the papers are spoiled, we'd never forgive ourselves."

They prodded with oars; they nearly upset themselves. They knew themselves to be watched by four furious eyes; but on they searched. At last, an hour later, they found themselves rowing triumphantly towards what yesterday had been the main highroad.

"Hullo, Misses!" They had rowed a good long length before they were hailed by a passing policeman punting himself towards them. "If you are the young ladies that's at Riston, I'm coming for you. There's a message come through to the station by wireless. And I was just setting out."

He stopped. He didn't speak another word for some time, but sat back and stared while torrents of information poured from the lips of Gerry and Flavia.

"That's done it; and for two young ladies! And you've got the spoils and all!" The policeman stared. "And if you don't deserve——"

"What we *want*, please, is home as quickly as possible," said Flavia suddenly, in rather a shaky tone. "And you'd better do what you think best with the people we've left behind in the house. I think that if you could row us to the station first, though, in time for the next train, it would be a good thing."

That was the end of their part of it. They reached home within two hours' time—in no train, but in a car put at their disposal by the Chief Constable, who accompanied them and the precious packet.

"Of all cute and clever young ladies," he reiterated at intervals as he told the tale to Dad and Aunt Drury.

Upstairs the cute young ladies, however, feeling more like rag-dolls now that the huge Crusoeing adventure was over, were hanging on to Mummy and being cried over in turns.

"My pets! Oh dear."

"Mummy, it wasn't so awful—except just the moment before we started away in the boat, and seeing them watch us. Oh, are the papers safe?"

They were.

"Aunt Drury having heard from you," explained their mother, "wired that she would like to come to us instead, and accept Dad's invitation that she had previously refused. She thought"—Mummy paused for a moment—"that too many Christmases had gone by without enough goodwill in them. You see, darlings, though we haven't talked about it, there *was* a misunderstanding. Aunt Drury holds for her lifetime some very valuable papers which eventually will become the property of Dad. He was anxious for them to be safely kept in the bank, and suggested that course years ago. Your aunt refused, and the result was rather a sad family disagreement. When, as Dad had foreseen, the burglary *did* take place, with the loss of the papers, he showed that he had not acted only in his own interests. He visited your aunt, and proved to her, I think, that family affection was stronger than stocks and shares. Since then"—the girls' mother paused for a moment—"your great-aunt has been terribly unhappy because she realizes that if she had only taken his advice the trouble would not have happened."

"I see," nodded Flavia sapiently. "Well, they've got them back now, and fancy *us* bringing them and not knowing anything about their existence!" Flavia yawned. "I don't know about Gerry," said Flavia; "but as for me, Mummy, I'm simply longing to finish off that sleep she woke me out of, while we were still Crusoeing, to show me Friday's footprint on the stairs!"



# The Secret Brotherhood

## CHAPTER XV—*continued*

JOHN and Leslie had caught the other two boys, and tactfully prevented them from following Brian. Graham and Jocelyn were both covered with confusion, and for a few minutes there was no answer. Then Graham exclaimed,—

"Brian, you ass! you mustn't ask people things like that."

"I don't see why not," persisted Brian. "I think you might tell me if it is true."

Graham looked at Jocelyn and whispered something at which she smiled and nodded, blushing still more. Then he said,—

"Perhaps it may be true some day. But look here, Brian, if you say a word about it to any one before I give you leave I'll wring your neck! Now, clear out, and for goodness' sake hold your tongue."

Brian looked surprised and rather hurt, but he obeyed his orders, and left the two together. He strolled on towards the house, and presently they caught him up. Graham stopped him, while Jocelyn went on alone.

"You young idiot!" said Graham severely, "I don't know what you deserve."

"But why?" asked Brian. "I only asked a perfectly harmless question."

"Perfectly harmless! I should have thought even you would have had sense enough to know that people can't ask questions like that. You put us in the most awful hole."

"But you want to marry her, don't you?" asked the culprit, beginning to look rather dismayed, and to realize that he had put his foot into it somehow.

"Of course I do. But, don't you see, we hadn't really settled anything. I hadn't dared to ask her right out, though I think she understood. And then you came butting in, and somehow it was all settled before we had time to think. Of course I wanted it frightfully badly, and I believe she does too. Only we can't afford to be married. I haven't got enough money to keep a wife."

"But she's got lots," said Brian stupidly. "She gave Donald a shilling yesterday."

"Oh, you ass! shut up. You don't know what you're talking about, and you deserve the worst thing that ever happened to you."

Brian was not at all sure whether Graham was really angry with him or not. In fact, Graham himself was not sure either. It had been an exceedingly embarrassing moment for him, but he and Jocelyn were certainly very much in love

with each other, and Brian's question had perhaps helped him out of a difficulty, for he had been trying to make up his mind whether he had any right to ask her to marry him.

"I'm awfully sorry, Graham, if I've made a mess of it," said Brian. But suddenly he exclaimed joyfully, "Why, of course it's all right if it's only money you want. There's the treasure!"

"That's not mine, you duffer, and it's never likely to be. It belongs to my uncle, and some day it will be Jim's. It can't make any difference to me."

"Well, the Secret Brotherhood of Treasure Seekers found it, and it jolly well ought to be yours. I've a good mind to speak to Mr. Graham about it."

"Brian, don't you dare to do anything of the kind!" exclaimed Graham, and this time there was no doubt that he meant what he said.

Brian had never heard him speak so fiercely before, so he repeated, rather ruefully,—

"I'm awfully sorry, Graham. It does seem to be a silly muddle. I thought it was quite easy to be married if you wanted to."

"Oh, all right, old chap. It was jolly decent of you to want to help me, and I'm a beast to be cross, but you won't say anything more about it, will you? because you don't understand, and you'd probably make things worse. Run away home to lunch now. You're coming back to the lake again afterwards, aren't you?"

Later in the day the engagement was made public, and Brian had to put up with a good deal of chaff about it when it was known how it had come about. Mr. Duncan, Jocelyn's father, said it was entirely due to him, and called him "Cupid," which made him exceedingly angry.

"Cupid was only a beastly little naked baby with wings," he said. "I'm not a bit like him. Besides, I didn't want them to be engaged, only Leslie said they were."

Leslie protested against this statement, and a regular fight followed, during which Donald, who was taking his brother's part, was heard to say vindictively that he wished it was Leslie who was engaged. He seemed to think it was quite the worst thing that could happen to anybody.

After tea every one had to help with the Christmas decorations, for the Hall, the Rectory, and the church had all still to be finished. And later in the evening the boys went round the village with the choir boys, singing carols, while their elders were very busy with more secret preparations for the next day.

The Rectory children all woke very early on Christmas morning to examine the contents of their stockings, which they declared were much



better than ever before. The boys each had a box of Meccano, a knife with many blades, and various other more or less useful implements, some foreign stamps for their collections, chocolates, and several other things; and Anne was wildly excited over all her toys. As she was only just four, she had very hazy recollections of any previous Christmas, and thought it a splendid idea. She was specially delighted with a little elephant the boys had given her, and refused to be parted from it for a moment, even wanting to take it to church with her, where she was allowed to go with her brothers for the first time.

Afterwards the whole family went to the Hall, and there was a very lively Christmas dinner. The only shadow was the absence of Mrs. Marston and Ursula, whose healths were drunk, as well as those of the betrothed couple, and that of old Robert Graham, the owner of the treasure. The last was Donald's idea, and when Brian said that it was not much good to drink the health of somebody who had been dead for "hundreds of years," Donald declared that the old miser would certainly come and haunt the Hall if he was left out, and wondered why he had not done so already.

Dinner was followed by a magnificent Christmas tree, and the children were all very pleased with it. Anne said that she would like candles on all the trees in the garden, and was evidently not quite sure that they had not actually grown there. As for Brian and Donald, when they found that, in addition to all their other presents, there was a watch for each of them from old Mr. Graham, they were almost mad with delight. But from the way they treated them, it did not seem likely that the watches would last for very long.

Jim was specially happy. He, of course, had

never spent such a Christmas before, and everything was almost as strange to him as to Anne, though by this time he was accustomed to his new life. He had now recovered entirely from his accident, and his foot was quite strong again, and he had grown into a very jolly boy. He was simply adored by his grandfather, who did his best to spoil him, and Jim was specially devoted to the old man.

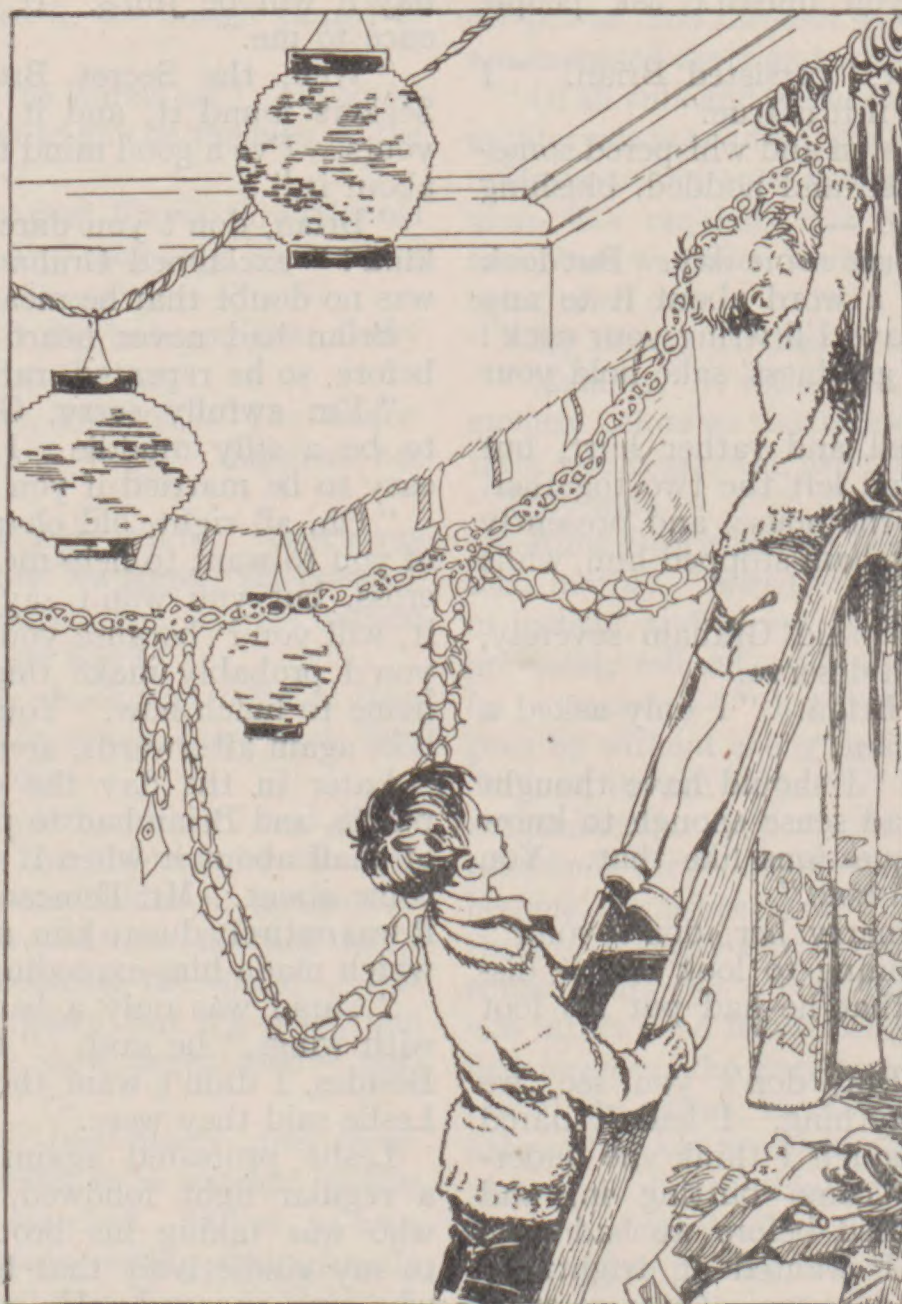
At the end of the day Graham told Brian that he had some news for him, and took him to his

own room. He explained that his uncle had guessed what his difficulty was about his engagement, and had just told him that there was no need to worry over it; for now that the treasure had been found, there would be ample means to give Graham a good salary for the management of the estate, as well as providing for Jim.

"And he's given me one of the best of old Robert's rings for Jocelyn," said Graham. "And he says we can be married as soon as we like. So you're the very best chum any one ever had, for really everything is due to you—Jim, and the treasure, and my engagement, and everything else."

Brian almost worshipped Graham, so he was overjoyed at this speech. He and

the other boys had long ago agreed that the treasure would never have been found if it had not been for the Secret Brotherhood, and they had almost come to believe that they had really set out to look for it, and had bravely risked countless dangers and difficulties in their efforts to find it and restore the missing treasure of Thorley to the Graham family. They conveniently ignored the fact that it could hardly be called missing, since, until it was found, nobody knew that it had ever existed.





## CHAPTER XVI

## CHANGES

AFTER Christmas Little Thorley settled down again to its ordinary life. Graham went to London to stay with the Duncans, and the three boys were having holidays. They were feeling very wealthy in consequence of Christmas tips from various relatives, so they clubbed together and bought a second-hand bicycle, which they very speedily learnt to ride after a series of small accidents to themselves and to it. The bicycle was not very smart in appearance, and they were constantly repainting it a different colour, but it seemed to be a remarkably strong and long-suffering one. After its owners had become thoroughly expert, it usually carried all three at once—one on the proper saddle, one standing on the step behind, and the third on another saddle (very insecurely fixed to the bar) with his legs up in front. It was rather surprising that there were not more accidents than there actually were.

The Marstons were very keenly looking forward to April, when their mother was coming home and Graham was to be married, and every moment they were not on the bicycle was spent in chipping bits out of their fingers in their attempts to make a "really good" bookcase for his wedding present. It was a great blow to them when they discovered that the wedding would take place from the bride's home in London, for it had never occurred to any of them that it would be anywhere but at Thorley. Of course Jim, as one of the family, would go to it, but Brian and Donald considered it extremely hard lines that they were to be left out altogether.

And then one day, when they had been grumbling about this and the general dullness of waiting till April, they had a surprise which more than made up for their disappointment. Jim was having tea at the Rectory when Mr. Marston suddenly announced that he had some news for them.

"What, Daddy? Is it good news?"

"Is Mummy coming home sooner?"

"Is it for me too, Mr. Marston?" asked Jim.

"It's nothing about Mummy, and it is for you too, Jim. It concerns all three of you, but I shouldn't like to say whether you'll think it good news or not."

"Is it anything about Graham or the wedding?" asked Jim.

"No. What a lot of duffers you are! I thought you would have guessed it at once."

"If it's kittens, I know it already," said

Donald. "And they're always drowned before they have time to get really interesting."

"It is not kittens," said his father. "What would you say to going to school?"

Brian exclaimed,—

"I was simply aching for it to be that, but I didn't dare guess, in case it should be wrong. Daddy, of course it's good news! You knew I wanted to go. Tell us about it quick!"

Jim also was pleased, and Donald, after giving one excited yelp, expressed his feelings by trying to stand on his head.

"Is it a boarding school?" asked Jim, with not very pleasant recollections of the kind of school he had sometimes been compelled to attend in the past.

"It is going to be a real proper school, isn't it?" Brian demanded anxiously. "Not Miss Smithson's, or anything like that?"

"My son, that good lady would not have you back at any price," answered his father. "You nearly scared the life out of her between you. But from the little I have so far seen of your future headmaster, I shouldn't imagine he'd be so easily scared."

A very ruffled Donald, rather breathless from his exertions, suddenly sat up on the hearth-rug and fired off a string of questions.

"What's he called? Have you seen the school? What's it called? Where is it? Oh, Daddy, do get on and tell us about it."

"One, Mr. Rutherford. Two, yes. Three, Westcote Towers. Four, about twenty miles from Carlisle. Next, please! But not more than four at a time."

"Daddy, do be sensible!"

"When are we going, Mr. Marston? This term?"

"No. Unfortunately you can't go till the summer term. They haven't any room for you till then. Brian and Donald, if you could stop asking questions even for a few seconds I might be able to tell you some of the things you want to know."

"Shut up then, Donald," said Brian, who had been making quite as much noise himself.

There was a sudden silence, and then their father began to explain.

"You really owe it to Mr. Graham," he said.

"He seems to have some idea that he owes you something—first, for finding Jim and providing him with a grandson, and, secondly, for finding the treasure. At least that was what he said to me, but it may only have been a tactful way of showing that he'd seen more than enough of you lately and wanted to get rid of you."

A further interruption followed this suggestion, until Jim said resignedly,—



"P'raps I should hear about it quicker if I went home to Grandfather at once."

"Daddy began it that time," said Donald, and he and Brian sat down resolutely with their hands over their mouths in order to prevent involuntary interruptions. Then their father went on,—

"Well, whatever his reason is, he is going to pay for all three of you. You boys ought to be awfully grateful to him."

"How topping of him!" said Brian.

"I've been scouring the country for miles round making inquiries about schools, but I finally came back to the one I've always wanted to send you to, Westcote Towers, even though it meant waiting till the summer. There are only forty boys, the youngest about nine, and the eldest fourteen, so you all come well in the middle."

"Donald, you lucky brat, you're going when you're only ten, and we've had to wait to be twelve!" said Brian.

"I'm not *only* ten. I'll be ten and a half by then, and you're not twelve yet."

"No; but we'll both be twelve in April, before we go. You'd better begin to save up for our birthdays, by the way."

"What an exciting month April always is," said Donald, not deigning to take any notice of this suggestion. "Last year Graham came, and then Jim. And this year there'll be Mummy coming home, and the wedding, and then school. Go on, Daddy, tell us some more."

"What else do you want to know?"

"What else? Why, everything, of course! You haven't really told us anything at all yet—what the school looks like, and Mr. What's-his-name, and the other masters, and everything you can think of," and Donald proceeded to wind up an imaginary handle in the middle of his father's chest.

Mr. Marston told them as much as he could, and afterwards both he and Graham (as soon as the latter came home) were constantly attacked with questions.

The excitement about school helped the next two months to pass very quickly, and great preparations, in which, of course, Jim was allowed to join, were made for Mrs. Marston's return. These included the making of triumphal arches, and miles of paper chains and decorations all over the house. The mess of coloured paper and stickphast everywhere was awful, but their father allowed it to pass without much objection, until one day when he came in and found a large brush full of paste left by Donald in the middle of his favourite armchair. After that they were ordered to keep their messes in the nursery, under penalty of having everything that was found anywhere else immediately destroyed.

At last the day actually arrived, and the Rector went to Carlisle to meet his wife and daughter, while Graham took charge of the three boys at Thorley Station, a task by no means easy, for Jim was nearly as excited as the two Marstons, and they all drove the station-master frantic with their questions, and were constantly in danger of tumbling off the platform.

When the train came in Brian and Donald nearly tore their mother in half. Graham and Jim only waited to greet the travellers, and then tactfully vanished, as they did not belong to the family party. Ursula was delighted to see her brothers again, and had grown so much that she and Donald almost looked like twins, although he was two and a half years older.

After a lively drive home, during which Brian nearly frightened his mother into fits by his pranks on the bicycle, there was Anne to be greeted and hugged. She was a little bit shy at first, but very soon remembered her mother and sister, and had as much to say as the others.

Of course most of the news had already been told in letters, but Mrs. Marston was very anxious to hear all about the boys' adventures more fully, and there was a great deal to talk about. They were allowed to sit up for late dinner that night—Donald feeling extremely proud of being in "Etons" for the first time—and even after that it was difficult to persuade them to go to bed.

The two birthdays, and preparations for the wedding and for school, filled up the whole of April. All the family from the Hall went to London for the wedding, and Jim travelled back by himself directly after it, just in time to join the Marstons before term began, and Mr. Marston conducted the three boys to school.

So by the time a whole year had passed since the arrival of Graham at Thorley, and the finding of Jim, the families both at the Rectory and the Hall were very much changed. Graham and his wife were coming back after their honeymoon to live in another house in the village, and he would still act as his uncle's land agent. The Rectory party seemed strangely small and quiet, with Ursula and Anne the only children at home, and the boys were very much missed.

They wrote most enthusiastic letters from school. Thanks to Graham's vigorous coaching the summer before, Brian had great hopes of getting into the school eleven, and could write of nothing but cricket; but Jim and Donald gave glowing accounts of all that they did, and it was clear that they were thoroughly enjoying their first term at Westcote Towers, and that they had lost none of their capacity for having adventures and getting into scrapes.



# Something to do on a Wet Day

## III.—CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

BY WINIFRED HAMMOND, F.R.H.S.

WHEN you read this month's "Something to Do" you will be longing for a rainy day just to begin the Christmas decorations that I am going to tell you how to make!

so, you must cut some strips of brightly coloured tissue paper 3 inches wide and fold them lengthwise into three equal parts (Fig. 1).

Then take a folded strip and cut through the three folds as shown in Figs. 3 and 4, when you will find that these two sets of cuts will now look like Fig. 2, with  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch left alternately at the edge to keep the strips together.

The next step needs *very* great care, otherwise you will tear the paper and thus spoil the chain; so, *very* carefully, open out the cut strip, and it will appear like Fig. 5.

Fig. 1

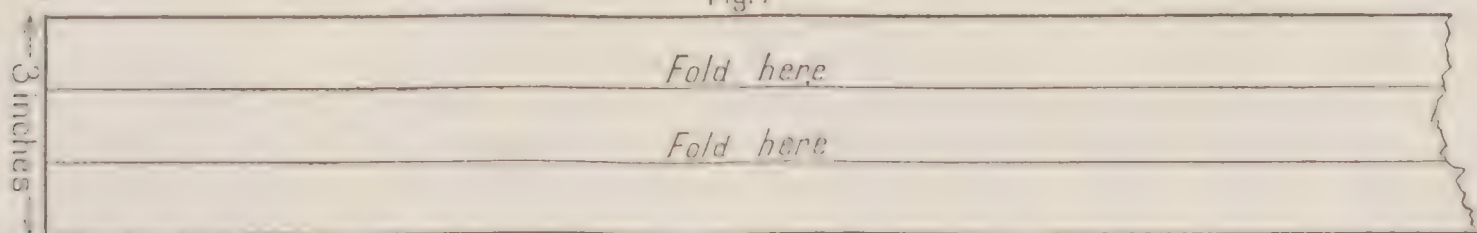


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

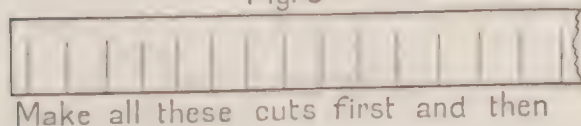


Fig. 4

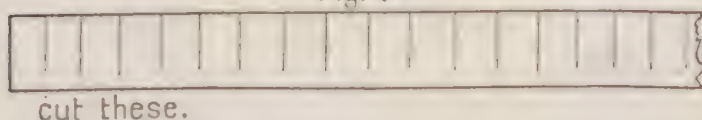


Fig. 6

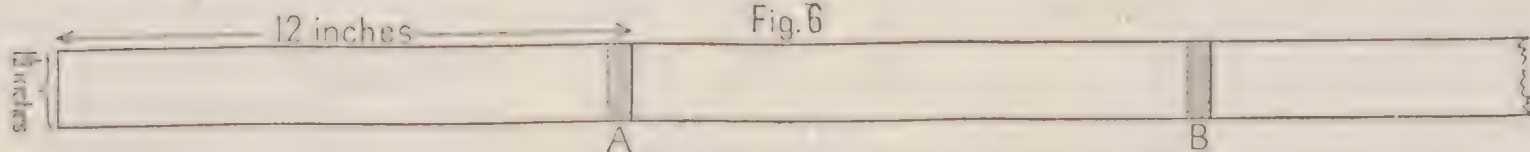


Fig. 7

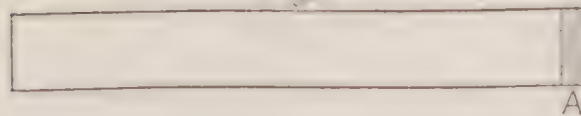


Fig. 8

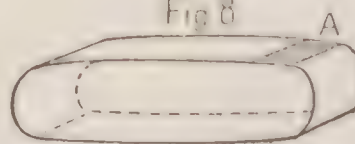


Fig. 9



Garlands, to hang across the room, or to festoon round the walls, are the first to think of, as they make such a "brave show" with very little work.

The lattice chain is fairly easy to make, but when it is finished it looks as if it had been very difficult, so I'm sure you will want to make some of these! If

(It "reads" as if it were very difficult to make this chain, doesn't it? But if you take it step by step, as I have described, you will really find it quite easy.)

All that has now to be done is to pull the strip out lengthwise, very gently, and to pinch it lightly



"breadthwise," and the lattice strip is ready. Then join as many of such strips together as you find necessary.

Another kind of paper chain will need a little paste. For this, cut your paper  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide and divide into pieces 12 inches long (Fig. 6). Put a little paste at A (Fig. 7) and fasten into a little paper band (Fig. 8).

Before pasting a second band, slip one end into the first ring you made and then paste, and continue thus until you have the required length of chain (Fig. 9).

A specially "Christmasy" decoration is a holly festoon. In this case, cut strips of green tissue paper

Crinkled paper is best for them. Cut into strips about 9 inches long and 6 inches wide, with the ends cut into "frills" (Fig. 14). A tiny toy or chocolate must be placed in the centre of each, and the strips rolled, and pinched about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch from each end. (This "pinching" will form a "neck" to be tied with little bits of ribbon from old Christmas cards.) Decorate with a tiny picture (Fig. 15).

Imitation Chinese lanterns can be made even by the tinies, and a number of them, although not able to be used for real lights, help to make a Christmas tree or paper chain very gay.

Cut the strips of paper 6 inches by  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and on these cut straight lines to within 1 inch of both

Fig. 10

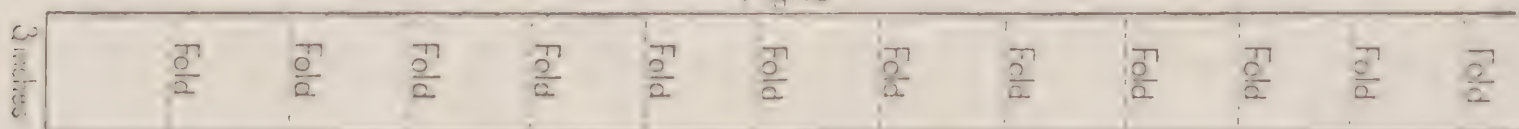
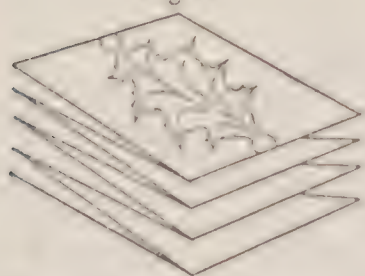


Fig. 11



Strip folded fan-fashion.

Fig. 12

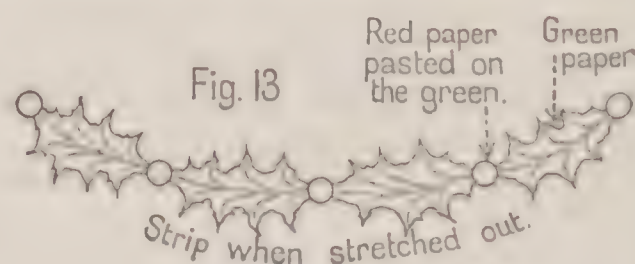


Fig. 13

Strip when stretched out.

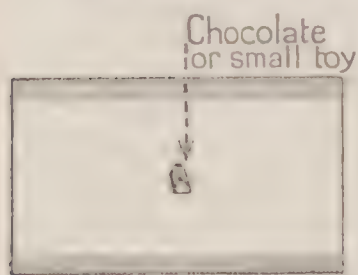


Fig. 14

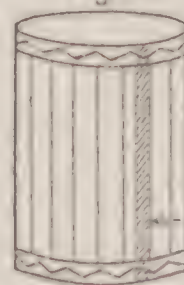


Fig. 15



Fig. 16

Fig. 17



Paste here.

Fig. 18



3 inches wide (Fig. 10), which must be folded backwards and forwards in squares, fan-wise (Fig. 11).

On the top of the folded squares, draw the shape of a holly leaf, and two half berries (Fig. 12). Press tightly together, and cut right through the folded strip over the pencilled leaf.

Open out carefully, and where the circles join the leaves, paste small rounds of red paper for berries (Fig. 13).

What a difference crackers make when decorating a tea-table for a party!

Of course an amateur "cracker-manufacturer" cannot make the gunpowder part, but you can contrive some crackers that will make your table very gay.

the bottom and the top (Fig. 16). Paste into a circle after having decorated the inch at the top and bottom (Fig. 17).

Press the top slightly down so as to make the strips bulge out, and fix a thread by which to hang up the lantern (Fig. 18).

A final hint for making any of these decorations—the papers chosen should be bright colours, especially those that will look well by gas-light. And don't choose too many different colours for one room. Try and think out a "colour scheme"; though green and red (the colour of berries and their leaves) are perhaps the cheeriest and most suitable at this season.



# Common Objects of the Country

## STICKLE-BACKS AND LAMPERNS

CHANGING our post of observation from the banks of the ponds to those of the running streams, we shall find there many creatures worthy of observation; so many, indeed, that it would be a hopeless task to attempt to give even a slight account of one-fiftieth of them.

I shall, therefore, only mention two creatures, as examples of the fish; and these two are chosen because they are exceedingly common, and very different from each other in colour and habits.

The first of these creatures is the common Stickle-back, or Tittlebat, as it is sometimes called. There are several species of British stickle-backs; but the commonest, and I think the most beautiful, is the three-spined



STICKLE-BACKS AND NEST.

stickle-back.

These little fish derive their name from the sharp spines with which they are armed, and which they can raise or depress at pleasure—as I know to my cost.

There are few fish more favoured in point of decoration than the stickle-back; although the decoration, like that of soldiers, is only given to the gentlemen, and of them only to the victors in fight.

They are most irritable and pugnacious creatures, that is, in the early spring months, when the great business of the nursery is in progress. And the word nursery is used advisedly; for the stickle-back does not leave her eggs to the mercy of the waters, but makes a home for them, over which her husband keeps guard.

The vigilance of this little sentry is wonderful; and I have often seen fierce fights taking place. Not a fish passes within a certain distance of the forbidden spot, but out darts the stickle-back like an arrow, all his spines at their full stretch, and his body glowing with green and scarlet. So furious is the fish at this time, that I have sometimes amused myself by making him fight a walking-stick.

If the stick were placed in the water at the distance of a yard or so, no notice was taken. But as the stick was drawn through the water, the watchful sentinel issued from his place of concealment, and when the intruding stick came within the charmed circle, the stickle-back shot at it with such violence that he quite jarred the stick.

His nose must have suffered terribly. If the stick were moved, another attack would take place, and this would be continued as long as I liked.

Sometimes a rival male comes by, with all his swords drawn ready for battle, and his colours of red and green flying. Then there is a fight that would require the pen of Homer to describe. These valiant warriors dart at each other; they bite, they manœuvre, they strike with their spines, and sometimes a well-aimed cut will rip up the body of the adversary, and send him to the bottom, dead.

When one of the combatants prefers inglorious flight to a glorious death, he is pursued by the victor with relentless fury, and may think himself fortunate if he escapes.

Then comes a curious result. The conqueror assumes brighter colours and a more insolent demeanour; his green is tinged with gold, his scarlet is of a triple dye, and he charges more furiously than ever at intruders, or those whom he is pleased to consider as such. But the vanquished warrior is disgraced; he retires humbly to some obscure retreat; he loses his red, and green, and gold uniform, and becomes a plain civilian in drab.

Sometimes I have brought on a battle royal between the guardians of several palaces, by dropping in the midst of them a temptation which they could not resist. This was generally a fine fat grub taken from a caddis case. The caddis is large and white, and so can be seen to a considerable distance.

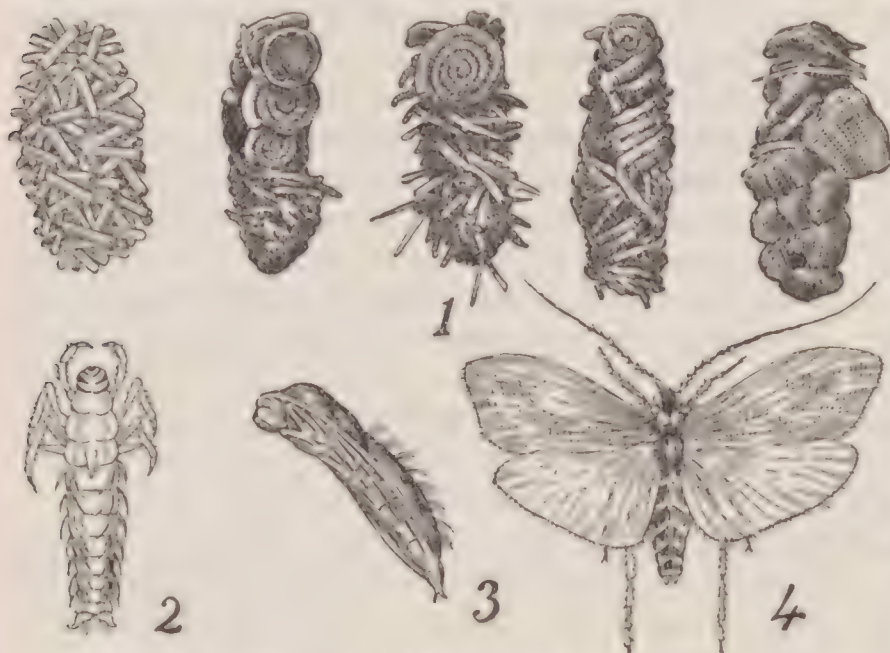
As this sank in the water, there would be a general rush at it, and the ensuing contention was amusing in the extreme. First, one would catch it in his mouth and shoot off; half a dozen



STICKLE-BACK, POND-WEED, ETC.



others would unite in chase, overtake the too fortunate one, seize the grub from all sides, and tug desperately, their tails flying, their fins at work, and the whole mass revolving like a wheel, the centre of which was the caddis worm.



1. CADDIS CASES. 2. LARVA OUT OF CASE. 3. PUPA. 4. CADDIS FLY.

It would be swallowed almost immediately, but the mouth of the stickle-back is much too small to admit an entire caddis, and the skin of the grub is too tough to be easily pierced or torn. Half an hour often elapses before the great question is settled, and the caddis eaten.

The rapidity of the movements and the fierceness of the struggle must be seen to be appreciated—and it is a spectacle easily to be witnessed; wherever there are stickle-backs, caddis worms are nearly certainly found, and it only needs to extract one of these from its case and deposit it carefully in the water.

The stickle-back is a hardy little fish, and can easily be kept in the aquarium, if plenty of room be given to it. It has even been trained to live in sea-water, by adding bay-salt to the water in which it dwelt.

The other representative of the fishes is a very curious one, and can be easily observed. It is called the "Lampern," and is shown in the illustration on this page.

In some parts of England the lampern goes by the name of "Seven-eyes," in allusion to the row of eye-like holes that may be seen extending along the side of the throat. These are the openings by which the water passes from the gills.

The chief external peculiarity in this creature is the mouth, which, instead of being formed with jaws like those of other fishes, resembles none of them, not even those of the eel, which it most resembles externally. Indeed, on looking at the mouth of a lampern, one is forcibly reminded of the leech, for it is possessed of no jaws, and holds firmly to the skin by exhaustion of the air.

Very delicate food are these lamperns, quite as good as the lampreys themselves, whose excellence is reported to have cost England one of her kings; yet I never knew but one person who would eat them, and very few who would even touch them, they also being called poisonous.

In Germany they know better, and not only eat the lamperns themselves, but, packing them up in company with vinegar, bay leaves, and spices, export them as an article of sale.

Really, the ill-feeling against the lampern is most singular. Even near London, when lamperns lived in vast numbers in the Thames, they were only used as bait, being sold for that purpose to the Dutch fishermen. In one season four hundred thousand of these creatures have been sold merely for bait for cod-fish and turbot.

The scientific name for the lampreys is a word which means "stone-sucker." The name is rightly applied; for when the lampern wishes to remain still in one place, it applies its mouth to a stone, sticks tightly to it by suction, and there remains firmly at anchor, and defying the power of the stream.



THE LAMPERN.

In favourable spots thousands of these fish may be seen together, quite blackening the bottom of the stream with their numbers. They seem to choose shallow mountain streams; and, in spite of the rapid current, wriggle their devious way up the stream



with great rapidity. When they are not quite pleased with the spot on which they settle down for the time, they scoop it out to their minds in a very short time. This task is done by means of the sucker-like mouth.

If a stone is placed in a position that hinders them in their work, they affix their mouths to it, and drag it away down the stream. In this way they will remove stones which are apparently beyond the power of so small a creature. By perseverance they thus scoop out small hollows, about eighteen inches long and a foot wide, in which they lie in groups so thick that I have more than once mistaken them for dark logs lying in the stream, and was only undeceived by the waving of the numerous tails.

Year after year the lamperns followed the same course, and chose the same positions, so that we could at any time tell where these creatures would be found by the thousand, where they would be found singly, and where none would be seen at all.

The general thickness of this creature is that of a large pencil, but it varies according to the individual. The length is from one foot to fifteen inches or so.

There is a much smaller species of lampern called the Pride, Sand-pride, or Mud Lamprey, which is not more than half the length of the lampern, and only about the thickness of an ordinary quill. This creature has not the power of affixing itself like the lampern, on account of the construction of its mouth.



## SMILES

*"The happy smiles of the young  
are the sunshine of the old"*



*Nephew.* "Yes, and what do you think, Auntie! I took seven wickets for forty runs."

*Auntie.* "Harold, don't exaggerate! I know perfectly well that there are only six wickets."

Sent in by GEORGE MOLYNEAUX,  
Adlington National School, Lancs,  
to whom a book prize has been awarded.

✦ ✦ ✦

*Father.* "Well, son, how do you like your new headmaster?"

*Son.* "He is a very good teacher, and he is always putting kisses on my books."

Sent in by LILIAN ORMEROD,  
Worsthorne Council School, Worsthorne, near Burnley.

✦ ✦ ✦

"CAN you tell me which is the bigger, Mrs. Bigger or her baby?"

"Yes; the baby, because it's a little bigger."

Sent in by EDWARD CALLAN,  
National School, Adlington.

"DARLING," said Auntie, "which do you like best—mummie, daddy, or me?"

*Jimmy.* "I don't want to tell you, because it's too near my birthday."

Sent in by PHYLLIS BANYARD,  
2 Armadale Road, Fulham, London, S.W.6.

✦ ✦ ✦

THREE jovial travellers were dining at a hotel, and agreed that the one who had the oldest name should be exempt from paying the bill. "My name is Richard Eve," said the first; "you must admit that is old." "I go back farther than that," said the second; "my name is Adam Low." The third said nothing, but pulled his card from his pocket, on which his companions read the words: "Mr. B. Ginning."

Sent in by WILLIE COOPER,  
Church School, Cornworthy.

✦ ✦ ✦

THE lesson of the day was about Moses and the Promised Land. The teacher asked a little girl why all the cities in the Promised Land had big high walls around them.

Wide-eyed with awe, the little girl answered: "That was to keep the milk and honey from running out, ma'am."

Sent in by E. McFETRIDGE,  
The Temple, Aghadowey, Co. Derry, Ireland.

✦ ✦ ✦

JIMMY, aged five, came home from school one day and announced that he was in love with a little girl named Hilda.

"In love?" said his mother, in great surprise. "Why, how do you know you are in love?"

"Because," he answered positively, "when I have anything I don't want myself, I give it to Hilda."

Sent in by FRANCES WIGLEY,  
Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge.

✦ ✦ ✦

PA had decided that little Johnnie should learn his alphabet in a more interesting manner than had hitherto been the case. With this idea he had invented a system of his own, which was a great improvement on the "A stands for Auntie, B stands for Bat" method. The first lesson was to be quite short. It was, too.

"Now, then, Johnnie," said Pa, "J stands for Johnnie."

"J stands for Johnnie," said the child.

"M stands for me," went on his father.

"M stands for you," said Johnnie.

"No, no; Y for you," corrected his father.

"No; J for me!" exclaimed Johnnie.

Then father found it was bedtime.

Sent in by MINNIE SMITH,  
Wheatley Lane Wesleyan School, near Burnley.



## STORIES for YOUNGER READERS



## Day by Day

Wednesday, June 6th (continued)

GRANDPAPA was very glad to see us indeed, and he made room for Fred on one knee and me on the other. We were so busy telling him all about the hens and baby chickens that we forgot to ask for a story till we heard him say,—

“When your Granny and I were first married our house was rather small, and there were not many bedrooms. As the basement room was a better size than the attic, Granny thought it would make a nicer bedroom for the maids. As Granny was young and not used to housekeeping, our two maids, Jane and Susan, thought they could lie in bed in the morning, so they often overslept. This did not do for me, as I had to be at work early, so I told them they must leave if they could not get up in time. Now Jane’s brother happened to be a postman. He used to pass our house every morning on his way to work, so Jane asked him to tap at her window to

wake her. He did this for some months, but then he left and found work in another town. Jane thought she would miss him in the mornings, so she left the curtain undrawn for the light to wake her.

The morning after he had gone there came a tap at the window just at the time when he used to wake her. She was startled, and could not think who it could be; she jumped out of bed and peeped over the muslin blind, but she saw nothing but a robin. ‘Whoever could have tapped?’ said Jane. Susan

said, ‘Perhaps it was a boy and he has run away. We will watch to-morrow and see if he comes again.’ So next morning Jane hid behind the curtain, where she could see out. Just at the time when her brother used to tap there came a tap again. Jane saw who had done it this time. A little robin had come and flown at the window, beating the pane with its wings. Susan sat up in bed, and the robin flew away. Every day the robin went on tapping until the maids sat up in bed, then it flew away. They were so much amused that one day Jane told your Granny. She thought Jane must have been dreaming, but both the maids said it had really happened; so next morning they left their door open, and just before the time when the tapping came, Granny went into the passage and watched. Soon she saw the robin come and tap.



The maids lay still as if they were asleep, and the little bird went on flapping at the glass with its wings till they sat up, then it flew away.”

Grandpapa had just finished when we heard the sound of wheels, so we said good-bye. Fred was so sleepy before we got home that Mother stopped and said Dick had better go behind and let us come in front with her, where Fred could sit between us, and then he could not fall out. He was fast asleep when we got home, and never woke when Daddy lifted him out and carried him upstairs.



THE ROBIN

## Motto for December

*No man will ever be fit to govern others that knows not first how to obey.*

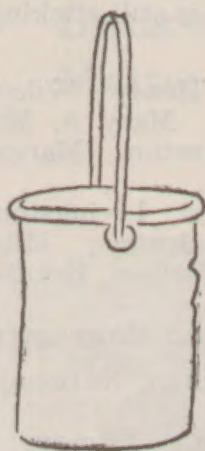
JEREMY TAYLOR.

Sent in by MARY BUTLER,  
Blanchville School, Rubery, near Birmingham,  
to whom a book prize has been awarded.

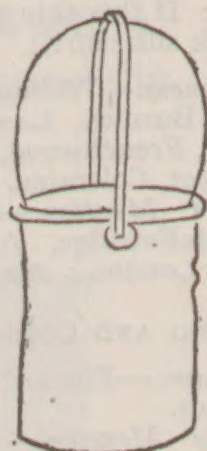


# Kiddies-Can-Do-It

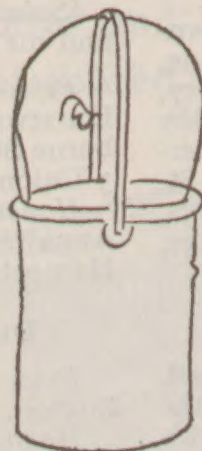
By Uncle  
Cobb Shinn



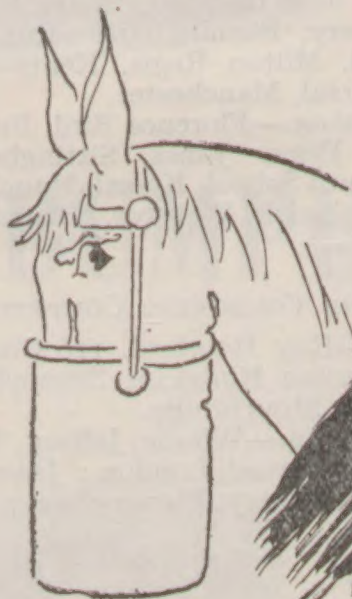
AN OLD  
BUCKET  
IS EASY  
TO DRAW



STAND AN EGG  
ON ITS END  
IN  
THE BUCKET

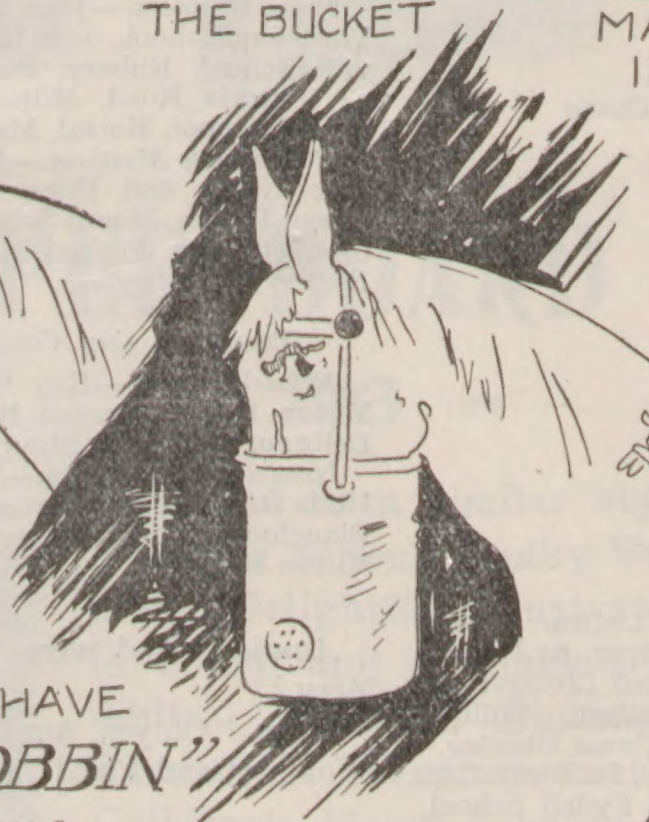


A FEW SIMPLE LINES  
MAKE THE EGG  
INTO A HORSE'S  
HEAD



AND YOU HAVE  
"OL' DOBBIN"

WITH HIS  
FEED-BAG ON



COBB SHINN

THE bucket is easy to make ; so is the egg ; no trouble at all to put on the two ears and add an eye. And when you have this all done you have your picture of "Ol' Dobbin" completed. You don't think for one minute that you could not draw this little cartoon, do you? Try, and see just how easy it is to draw.



## Prize List for October

### ESSAY COMPETITION

*Prize-Winners.*—Frances Wigley, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge. Margaret D. Brown, 65 Great Victoria Street, Belfast. Peggy Stokes, St. Dominic's School, Harpenden Hall, Harpenden, Herts. Marjorie Kail, Christ Church Girls' School, Worthing.

*Honourable Mention.*—Doris Hough and Mabel Townsend, St. Paul's C.E. School, Adlington; Leslie Wade, The Fydell School, Morcott; Patricia Labram, Norbury, S.W.16; Albert Green and Kenneth Smith, Wheatley Lane Wesleyan School, near Burnley; William Waterworth, National School, Adlington; Denise Smith, St. Dominic's School, Harpenden Hall; Irene Nichols, Christ Church Girls' School, Worthing; Walter Hodge, Glasgow; Maggie McMahon, Carnagh, Co. Antrim.

### DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (A)

*Prize-Winners.*—Alice Colclough, National School, Adlington, Lancs. Nellie Stubbs, Christ Church Girls' School, Worthing, Sussex. Tom Hughes, St. Mark's School, Connah's Quay.

*Honourable Mention.*—Frances Wigley, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton; Hilda Holding, National School, Adlington; William Roberts, St. Mark's School, Connah's Quay; Eveline E. Whitehouse, Fulham, S.W.6.

### CROSS-WORD PUZZLE

The solution is as follows:—

| ACROSS         | DOWN       |
|----------------|------------|
| 1. Fairyland.  | 1. Fall.   |
| 8. A.I.        | 2. Ian.    |
| 9. Ac.         | 3. Rick.   |
| 10. Lancaster. | 4. Last.   |
| 14. La!        | 5. Act.    |
| 15. Kit.       | 6. Dora.   |
| 16. La.        | 11. Aar.   |
| 17. R.M.       | 12. Air.   |
| 19. Cm.        | 13. Elm.   |
| 21. Oh!        | 18. Molar. |
| 23. Do.        | 19. Cobra. |
| 25. Lola.      | 20. Elba.  |
| 26. Ibex.      | 22. Halo.  |
| 27. Altar.     | 23. Dial.  |
| 28. Aeroplane. | 24. Axle.  |

*Prize-Winners.*—Alan Watson, 14 Lytton Street, Cheapside, Burnley, Lancs. Hilda Ruttner, 67 Fairfax Road, Hampstead, London, N.W.6. Fred Livingstone, c/o Mrs. Blain, 66 Cosgrave Street, Belfast. William Smith, Wheatley Lane Wesleyan School, near Burnley.

*Honourable Mention.*—James Valentine, St. Paul's C.E. School, Adlington; Leslie Edgson, The Fydell School, Morcott; Hilda Jeffrey, Corstorphine; Freda Norman, Cornworthy; Annie Moffat, Glasgow; Jean Ingham and Alice Smith, Wheatley Lane Wesleyan School, Burnley; Eileen Butler, Wallasey; Morag Mackay, Greenock; James Grubb, Sittingbourne, Kent.

### COMPOSITION COMPETITION

*Prize-Winners.*—Irene Packer, 26 Knivet Road, Fulham, S.W.6. William Greenwood, Worsthorne Council School, near Burnley, Lancs. Leonard Jones, St. Paul's C.E. School, Adlington, Lancs.

*Honourable Mention.*—Joan Chinchin, St. Dominic's School, Harpenden Hall; Betty Butler, Blanchville School, Rubery, near Birmingham; Gladys Fryer, Fulham, S.W.6; Margaret L. Skinner, Stoneybridge School,

Belbroughton; Joan Wilsher, Christ Church Girls' School, Worthing; Alice Smith, Wheatley Lane Wesleyan School, near Burnley; Peggy Hart, Mount School, Kersal, Manchester; Gwen Martin, The Fydell School, Morcott; Alan Watson, Burnley; Clifford Jones, Sittingbourne, Kent; Irene Breakey, Newry, Co. Down.

### WORD PUZZLE

[Solution: If this thin pin is still sticking, Jim, I will find his thick silk shirt.]

*Prize-Winners.*—William Henry Wilcock, Mission Hurstwood, Burnley, Lancs. Mary A. Morris, 79 Selborne Street, Frenchwood, Preston. Margaret Fletcher, 3 Union Street, Coleraine.

*Honourable Mention.*—Fred Livingstone, Belfast; Anna E. McFetridge, Aghadowey; Hilda Ruttner, Hampstead, London; Alan Watson, Burnley, Lancs.

### DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (B)

*Prize-Winner.*—Edward Callan, National School, Adlington, Lancs.

*Honourable Mention.*—Leslie Edgson, The Fydell School, Morcott; Ruby Elstone, Cornworthy Church School; Tom Price, St. Mark's School, Connah's Quay; Leathem Gilliland, Belfast.

### LETTER COMPETITION

*Prize-Winners.*—Jean Mary Ingham, Wheatley Lane Wesleyan School, near Burnley. Mary Butler, Blanchville School, Rubery, Birmingham. Ronald Groucher, 24 Victoria Road, Milton Regis, Kent. Nancy Kerr, Mount School, Kersal, Manchester.

*Honourable Mention.*—Florence Bird, Fulham, S.W.6; Eric Kemp and Peggy Jones, Sittingbourne, Kent; Olwen Davies, Mount School, Kersal, Manchester; Eileen Crockett and Frederick Webster, Blanchville School, Rubery, Birmingham.

### DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (C)

*Prize-Winners.*—Ray Horsford, 116 Charlotte Street, Milton Regis. Austen Hadgkiss, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge.

*Honourable Mention.*—Winnie Jeffrey, Corstorphine; Hilda Ruttner, Hampstead, London; Jean Summerfield, Blanchville School, Rubery, Birmingham; Marcus Cobb, Milton Regis.

✦ ✦ ✦

*Auntie.* "And were you a good girl in church, Mary?"

*Mary.* "Oh yes, Auntie; a man offered me a plate of money, and I said 'no thank you.'"

✦ ✦ ✦

"Is this the Adams' house?" asked the stranger of a Bostonian.

"Yes," was the reply; "it's Adam's house until you get to the roof, then it's eaves."

✦ ✦ ✦

*Ethel.* "Please, can you tell me the time?"

*Willie.* "I don't know exactly, but I know it isn't four o'clock yet!"

*Ethel.* "Are you sure?"

*Willie.* "Quite; 'cause I have to be home by four, and I'm not home yet."

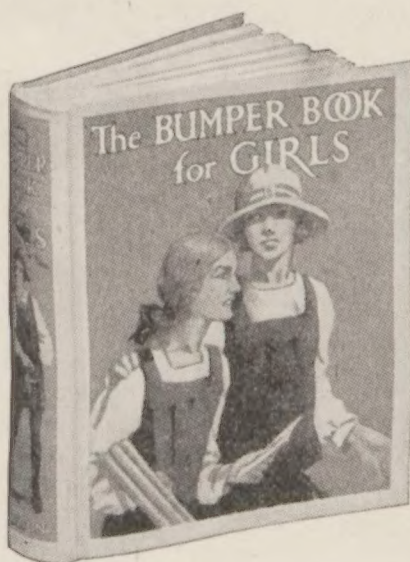
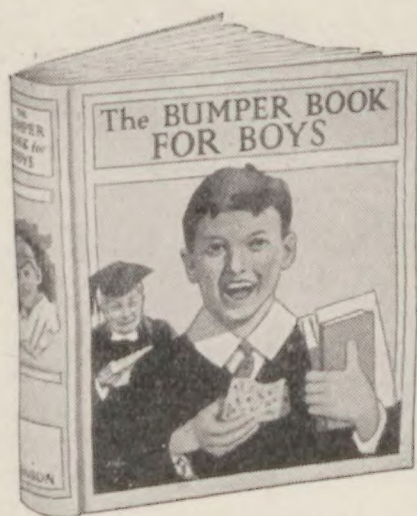




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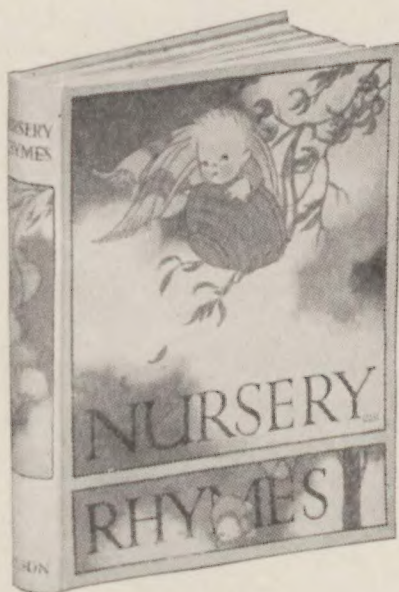


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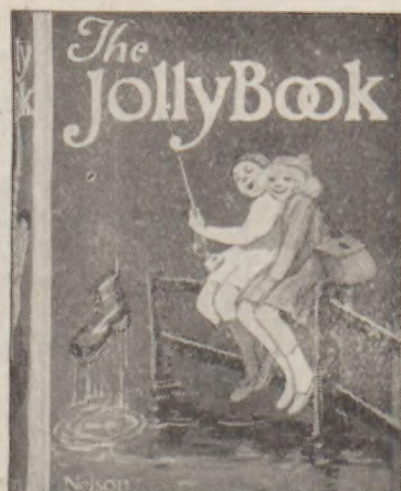


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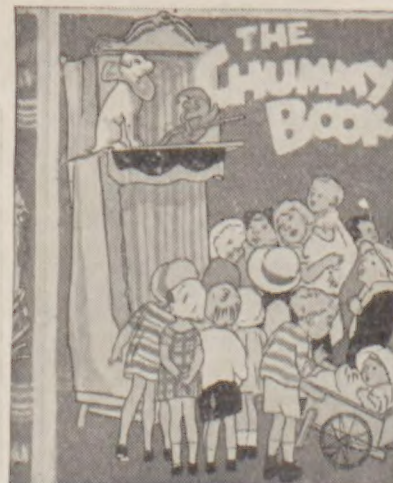


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